

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 R

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EXDIS FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHRISTOPHER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO SOVIET TRIALS

1. I ASKED INR FOR A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN REACTIONS TO THE SOVIET TRIALS WHICH FOLLOWS IN PARAGRAPH 2. THE REACTION IS POURING IN, BUT EVEN ON THE BASIS OF FIRST RETURNS, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU MIGHT WISH IN YOUR BACKGROUND SESSIONS WITH REPORTERS ON THE ISSUE, TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT WORLD REACTION TO THE TRIALS:

-- THE REACTION TO SOVIET ACTIONS HAS BEEN ACROSS A BROAD POLITICAL SPECTRUM, SHOWING THAT OUR OWN CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IS SHARED IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES AND BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PEOPLE OF VARYING POLITICAL VIEWPOINTS.

-- THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY HAS CONTRIBUTED TO FOCUSING WORLD ATTENTION ON VIOLATIONS OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS. NATIONS AROUND THE WORLD NOW KNOW THAT IF THEY SYSTEMATICALLY VIOLATE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, THEY DO SO UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT OF WORLD ATTENTION, AND AT THE RISK OF WORLD CONDEMNATION.

-- THE PARTICIPATION OF SO MANY OTHERS DEMONSTRATES

THAT CRITICISM OF SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES
CANNOT BE DISMISSED AS SIMPLY A U.S. CAMPAIGN, FOR
POLITICAL PURPOSES, AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION.

-- SIMILARLY, IT BELIES THE CRITICISM THAT OUR HUMAN
RIGHTS EFFORT IS AN ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE PECULIARLY
AMERICAN VALUES ON OTHER COUNTRIES; THERE ARE BASIC
HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH ARE INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED, AND
THE RIGHT OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION IS ONE OF THEM.

-- IT IS REASONABLE TO SUGGEST THAT AT AN EARLIER TIME,
COMPARABLE SOVIET TRIALS MIGHT HAVE LARGELY ESCAPED
THE WORLDWIDE ATTENTION AND CONDEMNATION FOCUSED ON
THE SHCHARANSKIY AND GINSBERG TRIALS.

2. BEGIN INR ANALYSIS

HIGHLIGHTS

-- MAJOR WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS ALL STRONGLY SCORED
THE TRIALS AND NOTED THE VIOLATIONS OF THE HELSINKI
FINAL ACT.

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-- THE BRITISH, FRENCH, AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTIES
EXPRESSED THEIR GRAVE CONCERN. THE FRENCH PARTY
DELIVERED A PROTEST NOTE TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY. MOST
OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY REACTIONS
REFLECT, TO A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE, A DESIRE TO CLIMB ON
THE BANDWAGON.

-- WE HAVE SEEN ONLY SCATTERED REACTIONS FROM OTHER
PARTS OF THE WORLD, BUT ALL OF THOSE, WITH THE
EXCEPTION OF THE JAPANESE REACTION, HAVE BEEN HIGHLY
CRITICAL. THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT
HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT WISH TO INTERFERE IN THE INTER-
NAL AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY.

COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY DETAILS FOLLOW:

EUROPE

GREAT BRITAIN

OFFICIAL: PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN TOLD PARLIAMENT ON
JULY 10 THAT THE TRIALS HAD "SOME OF THE HALLMARKS OF
A RETURN TO THE TRIALS WE KNEW IN STALINIST DAYS." HE
CAUTIONED THAT THE SENTENCES WILL PUT SOVIET RELATIONS
WITH OTHER COUNTRIES "TO A SEVERE TEST." FOREIGN

SECRETARY OWEN SAID THAT THE TRIALS ARE IN DIRECT CONTRAVENTION OF THE SPIRIT AND INTENTION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. HE ADDED THAT THERE CAN BE NO IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN LONDON AND MOSCOW WITHOUT PROGRESS OVER HUMAN RIGHTS.

UNOFFICIAL: MORE THAN 120 MP'S HAVE SIGNED A CROSS-PARTY RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE "APPROPRIATE ACTION." THE MOTION EMPHASIZES THAT MOSCOW MUST UNDERSTAND THAT "WE CANNOT...CONTINUE DEALING WITH THEM..."

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IN BUSINESS, THE ARTS, OR ANY OTHER FIELD WHILE THEY PERSECUTE AND HARRASS THOSE WHO ARE ONLY SEEKING TO EXERCISE HUMAN RIGHTS..."

IN A POLICY STATEMENT ISSUED ON JULY 13, THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY ANNOUNCED ITS GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE TRIALS. IT CALLED ON MOSCOW TO RESCIND THE SENTENCES AND RELEASE THOSE ON TRIAL.

FRANCE

OFFICIAL: THE QUAI ON JULY 10 ISSUED A STATEMENT EXPRESSING THE "SERIOUS CONCERN" OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND RECALLING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITMENTS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND THE JOINT FRANCO-SOVIET DECLARATION ON DETENTE SIGNED LAST YEAR BY BRZHNEV AND GISCARD.

UNOFFICIAL: A JULY 11 LE MONDE EDITORIAL SAID THAT MOSCOW IS APPARENTLY ON THE OFFENSIVE "TO ELIMINATE DISSIDENCE BY INTIMIDATING, HUMILIATING, AND BREAKING ITS OPPONENTS." THE EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT THE TRIALS SHOW MOSCOW "IS NO LONGER CONCERNED, AS IT WAS BEFORE THE HELSINKI AND BELGRADE CONFERENCES, TO GIVE ITSELF A PLEASANT IMAGE."

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY DELIVERED A PROTEST NOTE TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY ASKING THAT GINZBURG AND SHCHARANSKIY BE FREED. THE PARTY'S DAILY NEWSPAPER, HUMANITE, CLAIMED THAT IT WAS GINZBURG'S RIGHT, AS A CITIZEN, "TO SHOW DISAGREEMENT WITH THE POLICY OF HIS GOVERNMENT" AND ADDED THAT COURTS "SHOULD HOLD THEIR SESSIONS IN THE FULL LIGHT OF DAY."

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WEST GERMANY

OFFICIAL: GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN BOELLING ON JULY 10
REITERATED BONN'S CONCERN THAT MOSCOW CONTINUES TO

VIOLATE THE BASIC TENETS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER WAS DESCRIBED BY A FREE
DEMOCRATIC PARTY SPOKESMAN, JULY 13, AS BEING "DEEPLY
SHOCKED" AT GINZBURG'S SENTENCE. GENSCHER ALSO SAID:
"WE DO NOT EXPECT THE SENTENCE AGAINST HIM TO BE THE
FINAL WORD."

SCHMIDT, AT A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENT
CARTER, JULY 14, EXPRESSED "FULL AGREEMENT" WITH THE
PRESIDENT'S REMARKS DEPLORING THE PROSECUTION OF
SHCHARANSKIY AND OTHERS.

ITALY

OFFICIAL: PRESIDENT PERTINI SENT A MESSAGE TO BREZHNEV
ON JULY 11 URGING THAT THE TRIALS NOT VIOLATE THE
"HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL LIBERTIES SANCTIONED BY
THE PRINCIPLES OF THE FINAL HELSINKI ACT."

UNOFFICIAL: A FRONT-PAGE COMMENTARY IN THE ITALIAN
COMMUNIST PARTY DAILY, L'UNITA, ON JULY 11, NOTED THAT
THE TRIALS RAISE "DEEP UNEASINESS AND REPROBATION" AND
"CALL INTO QUESTION A COMMITMENT TO CERTAIN PRINCIPLES
TO WHICH THE USSR COMMITTED ITSELF AT HELSINKI."

DENMARK

OFFICIAL: A DANISH PROTEST TO MOSCOW ON JULY 11 VOICED
"DEEP CONCERN" ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE "CONTINUATION OF EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN FURTHER
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SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE AND...THE INTERNA-
TIONAL CLIMATE IN GENERAL." THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
SAID THAT DENMARK WAS IN CONTACT WITH SWEDEN AND NORWAY
AND "IN OUR FORMULATION WE ARE IN FULL AGREEMENT."

PRIME MINISTER JORGENSEN STATED ON JULY 13 THAT IT IS
A "SERIOUS THING" WHEN DANES REACT TO JUDICIAL PRO-
CEEDINGS IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, BUT WHEN THE PROCEEDINGS
VIOLATE THE HELSINKI ACCORD, "IT IS NECESSARY" FOR
DENMARK TO REACT. JORGENSEN EMPHASIZED THAT THE PROTEST
WAS PREPARED AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE EC COUNTRIES
AND THE POINTS MADE ARE IN AGREEMENT WITH SEVERAL STATE-
MENTS MADE IN THOSE COUNTRIES.

UNOFFICIAL: THE DANISH PRESS HAS GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED
THE TRIALS AS A SERIOUS, POSSIBLY DELIBERATE, THREAT TO

DETENTE AIMED PRIMARILY AT THE U.S. BUT ALSO HAVING
IMPLICATIONS FOR ALL THE SIGNERS OF THE HELSINKI ACCORD.

IRELAND

OFFICIAL: FOREIGN MINISTER O'KENNEDY STATED ON JULY 12
THAT "THERE IS EVERY DANGER THAT THE SUPPORT BY WORLD
PUBLIC OPINION WHICH IS SO NECESSARY FOR DETENTE COULD
BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE PRESENT
TRIALS."

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA

UNOFFICIAL: AN EDITORIAL IN THE JULY 12 AMRITA BAZAR
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PATRIKA SAID THAT "THE FEELING AROUND THE WORLD TODAY IS
THAT NEITHER THE SOVIET METHODS OF TRIAL NOR SOVIET
VERSIONS OF THE OFFENSES ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE DISSIDENTS
ARE ENTIRELY CONVINCING AND PROPER."

OTHER NEWSPAPERS GAVE THE TRIALS WIDESPREAD NEWS
COVERAGE. MANY FOCUSED ON THE US-SOVIET "CONFRONTATION."

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL

OFFICIAL: PRIME MINISTER BEGIN, IN AN ADDRESS TO THE
KNESSET, DENOUNCED THE TRIALS AS INVALID BECAUSE OF THE
SOVIETS' GROSS VIOLATION OF CIVILIZED LEGAL PROCEDURES.
HE CALLED FOR ALL NATIONS TO INTERVENE IN ORDER TO
SECURE THE RELEASE OF THE UNJUSTLY ACCUSED DISSIDENTS.

EAST ASIA

JAPAN

OFFICIAL: A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN REFUSED, JULY 14, TO
COMMENT ON THE TRIALS BECAUSE "WE DO NOT WISH TO
INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY."

AUSTRALIA

OFFICIAL: FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK STATED AT A PRESS

CONFERENCE ON JULY 11 THAT THE TRIALS CAST SERIOUS DOUBTS
"ON RUSSIA'S PROFESSED INTENTION TO HONOR ITS INTERNA-
TIONAL OBLIGATIONS TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS."

LATIN AMERICA

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ARGENTINA

UNOFFICIAL: AN EDITORIAL IN THE JULY 12 BUENOS AIRES
HERALD, ARGENTINA'S MOST OUTSPOKEN NEWSPAPER ON HUMAN
RIGHTS, CLAIMED THAT THE KREMLIN, BY HOLDING THE TRIALS
IN THE SAME WEEK AS THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH
BROMYKO, "SEEMS TO BE CHALLENGING PRESIDENT CARTER TO
A SHOWDOWN ON A MORAL ISSUE." THE EDITORIAL ADDED THAT
THE ASSURANCES MOSCOW GAVE AT HELSINKI ON HUMAN RIGHTS
HAVE BEEN "CYNICALLY FLOUTED."

THIS IS A PRELIMINARY REPORT BASED ON AVAILABLE INFOR-
MATION. WE WILL UPDATE IT AS WE RECEIVE MORE. IN ORDER
TO MAKE SURE THAT WE HAVE ALL OFFICIAL REACTIONS, WE
HAVE ASKED OUR POSTS TO CABLE ALL PERTINENT OFFICIAL
COMMENTS.

ICA IS COMPILING PRESS REACTIONS.

END INR ANALYSIS. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIEFING MATERIALS, PRESS CONFERENCES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, POLITICAL TRIALS, COURT DECISIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE179551
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/P - SBERGER:EDH
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780291-0690
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197807106/baaazfx.tel
Line Count: 305
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3070566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1857204
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTIONS TO SOVIET TRIALS
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, SHUM, US, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3070566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014